Replied 2/16/95. T/SOR/49/5/3/2

August 1, 1995

Dear Friend::

I am hoping that you can help me with a one month Campaign to highlight the situation of prisoner, Ojore Nuru Lutalo, formerly known as Leroy Bunting. Ten years ago in February of 1986, the New Jersey Department of Corrections placed Ojore in the infamous Management Control Unit (MCU) in New Jersey State Prison. He was told that a "confidential informant" reported him "plotting an escape". In spite of the fact that they claim that "physical evidence was found at the origin of the escape plot", Ojore was never charged or found guilty of such a "plot". Mr. Lutalo was then informed by the Management Control Unit Special Classification Committee that he would have to "change his oppositional stance and his social profile" before they would consider release. This is indicated in Classification Committee reports dated March 18, 1986 and December 26, 1989.

The Management Control Unit is a long term isolation/sensory deprivation unit within the maximum security prison. The people held there are allowed out of the isolation cage for two hours out of every 48. They are permitted limited telephone use and visitation, and their mail is tampered with. Movement out of the cage is accompanied by a body search and shackles. The MCU is reserved for political prisoners, political radicals, militant Islamics and jail house lawyers. It is reserved for anyone that the prison administration feels can teach or pass along Afrocentric lore, history or political perspective. People are <u>NOT</u> placed there because they have committed any infraction. They are placed there for who they are and what they believe. Ojore has been forced to live in isolation for ten inexcusable years - a decade in isolation for a belief in the liberation of his people.

We want to institute a one month blitz of postcards, telephone calls, faxes and letters throughout the month of February of 1996 protesting his decade in isolation. Certainly Ojore is not alone in this kind of treatment. The United States has control units proliferating all over the country to contain the growing level of political radicalism in the prison population. Ojore needs to be highlighted because of the extraordinary amount of time he's been forced to endure this physical and psychological torment.

We are targeting the Governor of New Jersey, Christie Whitman, for this short term, International campaign. While none of us working on this is so naive to think that this will result in Ojore's release, we are hoping it will draw the attention of the public and legal community to garner support.

I am enclosing a packet of material on Ojore's plight, along with news articles which will confirm the purpose of the Management Control Unit.

If you believe that you can help in organizing this brief effort, I would be happy to hear from you. Let me know about how many cards/faxes etc. you think you can generate, or if you have other ideas to push this brief campaign forward. We will be developing sample letters, text of phone calls and so on to be sent out in a future mailing.

I'll look forward to hearing from you. Take care.

Sincerely,

Bonnie Kerness

T/SOR/49/6/3/2

08

LUTALO, O.

59860

CLOSED OUTSIDE DOOR OF CONTROL UNIT CAGE (BLUE) WITH PLEXIGLASS WINDOW.

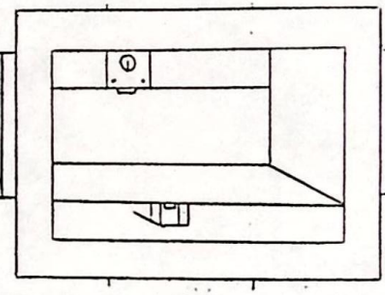
Classic Collector

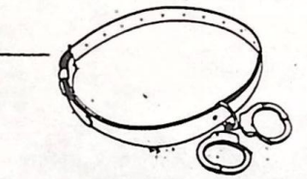
ELECTRIC SLIDING DOOR THAT IS OPEN AND CLOSED BY GUARDS IN THE BOOTH.

Classic Collector SUNDAY - JULY 16TH - 1995

PORTHOLE ADJACENT TO STEEL SHELF IN SIDE CAGE WHERE WE EXTEND OUR HANDS TO BE HANDCUFFED BEFORE COMING OUT!

Classic Collector

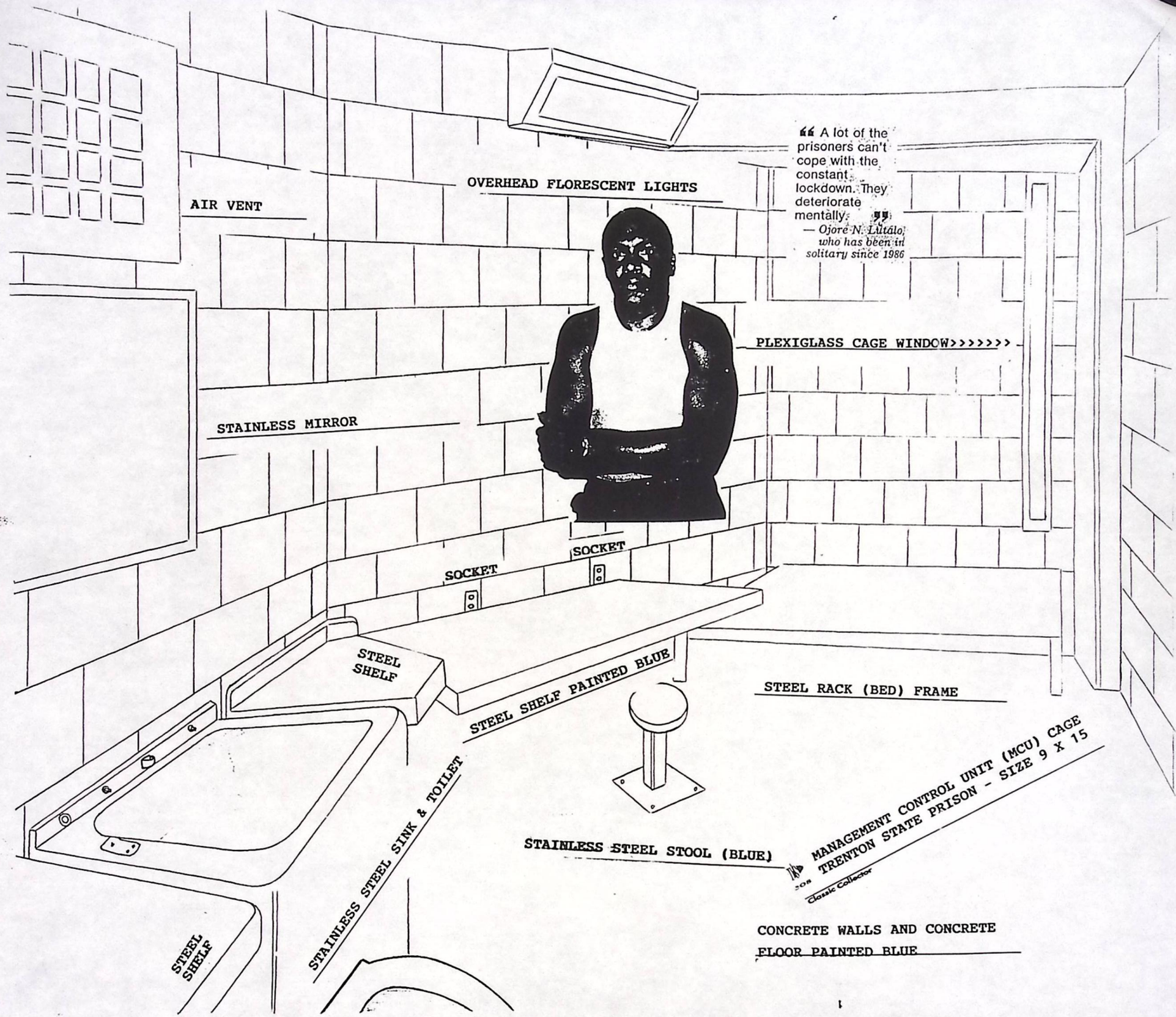




NIGHT STICKS (NIGGER BEATERS) GUARDS CARRY WHEN THEY ARE ESCORTING US....

Plastic NIGHT STICKS with Grenade Grip. Comes complete with leather thong.

T|SOR|4-9|6|3|2



"A lot of the prisoners can't cope with the constant lockdown. They deteriorate mentally."

— Ojore N. Lutalo, who has been in solitary since 1986

T/SOR/49/5/3/2

AMERICAN FRIENDS SERVICE COMMITTEE

NEW YORK METROPOLITAN REGION
New Jersey Community Relations Program
972 Broad Street, 6th Floor
Newark, New Jersey 07102
201/643-3079 FAX 201/643-8924

Wray Bailey, Director Bonnie Kerness, Associate Director

Replied 13/9/95

August 31, 1995

Dear Jeanne Andrews:

I am in receipt of your letter which was postmarked August 24th. I'm so delighted that you are willing to help us with the 10 Year Campaign for Ojore. I'll be sending out another mailing sometime early this winter which will give everyone specific information about who to contact, how and when.

I am enclosing a listing that I used to send out packets of information on the Campaign. If you can use that to make contacts to increase the impact, we would be most grateful.

I am enclosing some political materials which Ojore has developed, along with the text of a lecture I gave at a local college this past Spring. I am also enclosing a listing of political pamphlets that we have for your information.

Thank you for sharing the material on the Solidarity Centre, (which was most impressive), along with the other information. I enjoyed. I'm going to forward it to Ojore.

Please feel free to be in touch if I can be of assistance in any way. I'll be back in touch soon. Again, thanks so much for your help.

Sincerely,

Bonnie Kerness

Bonnie Kerness

REC 9/10/95 Rep 12/10-

T/SOR/49/6/3/2

October 3, 1995

Dear Jeanne Andrew:

I'm in receipt of yours of September 13th. Ojore has told me of the letters from both you and Leslie and of the materials he's sent. He suggested that I send you "To Move Forward" which is a piece he, I and Kom'boa developed prior to the 1994 ABC conference here in New York, at which I gave the keynote speech (I have copies of that if you are interested. Basically I asked that they involved themselves nation wide in control unit work, which did not happen). Although we had hoped for some cohesion of purpose to come out of that conference, none did. It is still a "scene" with no purposeful work being done, although there are some exceptions. I am also enclosing the catalogue of NJ ABC, along with some old issues of their newspaper (which I believe that they have ceased publishing).- I would suggest you be in touch with Mona Neil of NJ ABC.

Also enclosed is an invitation to a forum at which I'll be a panelist. Did I send you a copy of my control unit lecture given on the Paterson College Campus? They want to revise that lecture a little and deliver that. I'm also enclosing some letters to the editor. It would help me a lot of, when you write back, you list what I have sent you. This way I won't repeat. I've been a prisoner activist for many years and tend to overload people with material. I am also sending a copy of "Bits and Pieces" by Sundiata Acoli. Aside from my work and relationship with Ojore, I work on Sundiata's Campaign and with a number of the other political prisoners or prisoners of war.....so it you want information on any particular prisoners here, please don't hesitate to let me know. If you think there is any way I can assist in the growth of your group, or in the development of political education groups, for sure be in touch. Ojore and I do a lot of work developing both individuals and groups to work in the prison arena. A lot of this work takes place over the issue of control units. Again, my memory fails me, and I don't know if I've sent you information on this.

What was the Solidarity Festival? How did it go? Can we send materials for you to distribute at something like that? Have you developed any materials that we could distribute. I'm sure some of the local ABC groups would be interested in your work.

One of the women political prisoners here - Marilyn Buck - is developing a proposal which she wants distributed internationally. It'll be geared towards amnesty for political prisoners everywhere for the year 2000-2001. I'll get it to you as soon as she sends it to me. Are there political prisoners in Scotland? I have Scottish blood in my ancestry, by the way. My great-grandmother lived on Gibraltar and she of was mixed Scottish-Irish blood, who married a Spaniard.

My best to you and Lesley on your work. I'd be pleased to help in any way. Take good care.

Bonnie

→ over

P.S. I'll also be enclosing a copy of my latest (short) Talk, a pamphlet that I've made up of one of Kropotkin's essays, plus a series of articles printed in an anarchist newspaper re: "revolutionaries". I'd love to know what you think of the materials I'm enclosing as well as what I sent last time.

Take care.

Bonnie

Jose asked also that I send you the "Case of Ruby B" to you.

T|SOR|49|5|3|2

Law Office of
Kunstler and Kuby
13 Gay Street
New York, N.Y. 10014
(212) 924-5661
Fax (212) 691-3204

William M. Kunstler
Ronald L. Kuby

Staff
Sue Bailey
Rosa Maria de la Torre
Gavrielle Gemma

L. L. Anderson
Correctional Lieutenant
Investigative Services Unit
Pelican Bay State Prison

Re: October 6, 1995 Memorandum

Dear Lt. Anderson:

I am the attorney for Bonnie Kerness, whose name appears in a Memorandum dated October 6, 1995, bearing your signature. In this memorandum, you make several false and defamatory statements. I am putting you on notice that said statements are false and defamatory, and demand herewith that you provide me with written notice that said false and defamatory statements have been deleted or corrected.

In paragraph 2 of subsection 1, you state: "Bonnie Kerness who acts as a mail drop for prisoners and militant organizations throughout the United States."

Bonnie Kerness is the associate director of the American Friends Service Committee's (AFSC) New Jersey Criminal Justice Program. AFSC is a Quaker organization. In her professional capacity, she receives requests from prisoners for information, and she provides information to prisoners. The term "mail drop" falsely implies that Ms. Kerness facilitates otherwise prohibited prisoner to prisoner correspondence. She does not. The material she sends into the prison system is mailed in non-privileged envelopes and is subjected to the same scrutiny as all other incoming communications.

In paragraph 4 of subsection 1, you state: "the Prison News Service has since been identified as the newsletter for the BGF [Black Guerilla Family] . . . . " This is false. PNS is not the newsletter for the BGF, is not accountable to the BGF, has no members of the BGF who have writing or editorial control over the content, and is not otherwise affiliated with the BGF.

I wish to remind you that under California law, anyone who distributes, let alone authors, libelous material can be held for damages. For example, in Osmond v. EWAP, Inc., 153 Cal.App. 3d 842, 852 (1984), the Court of Appeal held that a distributor is subject to liability if he "knew of the libelous content of the article or that facts were known which imposed [upon him] a duty to investigate." This letter hereby puts you on notice that the statements made in your memorandum are false.

I would also note that designating Minister Louis Farrakhan's Nation of Islam as a "terrorist organization," sympathetic to the overthrow of the government, is as ridiculous as it is defamatory. The Nation of Islam just held a rally in which over one million Black gathered in our nation's capital to celebrate a day of atonement and brotherhood. The call was for personal responsibility, building Black economic institutions, and to refrain from using violence and vulgar language. Hardly a "terrorist" agenda. As to your allegation that the Nation of Islam attempts to "foment violence," I can only note that there was not a single arrest of any of those million-plus Black men. I am forwarding this letter to attorneys for the Nation of Islam for their response.

Please have your attorney contact me with the proof that the two defamatory references to my client have been corrected.

Sincerely,

Ronald L. Kuby

(enclosure)

cc: Stephan James

T/SOR/495/32

NAME: MERCED, J. CDC#: D46878

On 10-6-95 a thorough review of Subject's central file was conducted in response to an appeal, Log # PBP-95-06966 and second level modification order Log # 95-171. After the review it is determined that Subject presents a threat to the security of the institution and the safety of others. His continued placement in the Security Housing Unit (SHU) is considered appropriate. The following information was reviewed to support this conclusion:

1. Confidential memorandum dated 11-1-93. This memorandum clearly outlines Subject's affiliation with terrorist organizations and support of the New Afrikan Revolutionary Nationalism (NARN). NARN is considered synonymous with the Black Guerrilla Family (BGF) prison gang and is now accepted as a source for validation purposes.

   This memorandum refers to Subject's correspondence with Bonnie Kerness who acts as a mail drop for prisoners and militant organizations throughout the United States.

   Some correspondence connects Subject with individuals linked to the Weather Underground and the Nation of Islam. These two terrorist organizations are well noted for their sympathies to overthrow the government and foment violence.

   The Prison News Service is organized by Bonnie Kerness. The Prison News Service has since been identified as the newletter for the BGF and many articles have appeared on the Internet espousing revolution and armed revolt against the government of the United States. The Prison News Service is also identified as a nationwide newsletter which is distributed to federal and state penal institions.

   Subject has been identified as holding the rank of Sergeant of Arms for the BGF. His affiliation with the Northern Structure indicates his willingness to form an alliance with another prison gang.

   The investigators concluded that Subject was a threat to the safety of others and the security of the Institution.

2. On June 9, 1993 an incident occurred in B Facility involving inmates in the Muslim community. A subsequent search of Subject's property was conducted. His property included literature related to the BGF, Black Liberation Army, Islamic Liberation Army and

T/SOR/49/5/3/2

African National Ujamaa. Found in Subject's property was also the New Afrikan People's Organization Official Document II. This document is identified as the ideological precept of the BGF.

During the search a note in Subject's handwriting was discovered and Subject identified himself as a "cadre" with "NAPO" (New Afrikan People's Organization) which is also synonymous with the BGF. "Cadre" identifies Subject as having some leadership over a select group of inmates, and responsibile for organizing and educating the group he is responsible for supervising (see confidential memorandum dated June 23, 1993). Further noted is Subject's handwritten outline of the six point outline for strategic guerrilla warfare. This outline further identifies Subject as having a command relationship with a cadre and organizing a unit at Pelican Bay.

Much of the information discovered in 1993 regarding NARN and NAPO was not yet recognized as a validation source to identify an inmate as a member or associate of the BGF. Since that time NARN and NAPO are considered synonymous with the BGF. Further, the leadership of the BGF frequently corresponds via the Prison News Service.

3. Confidential memorandum dated February 21, 1991. This memorandum identifies Subject as member of the BGF holding the rank of Sergeant at Arms at Tehachapi. Further, the memorandum identifies Subject as transporting weapon stock.

On December 27, 1994 a validation package was prepared and referred to the Law Enforcement and Investigations Unit to identify Subject as an associate of the BGF. The most recent review and update confirming Subject's status is dated September 28, 1995.

Subject's current classification score is 210. With an EPRD of September, 1996, Subject's score is primarily attributed to his disciplinary history. Subject's disciplinary history wherein he was found guilty includes:

CDC 115 dated 3-31-94, Force and Violence
CDC 115 dated 12-21-93, Fighting
CDC 115 dated 12-21-93, Inciting Others
CDC 115 dated 2-5-93, Out of Bounds

T60R/495/32

CDC 115 dated 1-24-93, Resisting Staff
CDC 115 dated 4-27-92, Threatening Staff
CDC 115 dated 1-26-92, Assault/Battery on a Prisoner
CDC 115 dated 12-1-91, Refusal to Lockup
CDC 115 dated 11-30-91, Threatening Staff
CDC 115 dated 10-21-91, Circumventing Mail
CDC 115 dated 10-18-91, Assault/Battery on a Prisoner
CDC 115 dated 9-28-91, Assault and Battery on a Prisoner
CDC 115 dated 8-15-91, Assault and Battery on a Prisoner
CDC 115 dated 1-17-91, Manufacturing a Stabbing Instrument

General informational chronos include:

CDC 128B dated 3-25-94 Subject was identified as an assailant in an assault and stated, "This should show the Mexicans not to move on Blacks."

CDC 128B dated 9-9-93 Subject accused staff of being a member of the Klu Klux Klan and challenged officers to a fight.

CDC 128B dated 8-19-93, Subject accusses staff of beating an inmate and threatening to retaliate.

In summary, Subject is identified as a leader and organizer for the Black Guerrilla Family prison gang. His behavior since 1991 clearly indicates a violent tendency and total disregard for authority. The Black Guerrilla Family has been responsible for eleven staff homicides since 1971. Subject has clearly made threats to harm staff. Further, Subject's association with terrorist organizations constitutes a threat to the safety of others and the security of the institution. Subject was placed in segregation in December, 1994. It appears that Subject's confinement has provided a structured atmosphere and his behavior has improved. However, Subject's recent and active involvement in the BGF, his organization and leadership, and his behavior clearly affirm that he continues to pose a threat to the security of the institution and safety of others.

L.L. ANDERSON
Correctional Lieutenant
Investigative Services Unit
Pelican Bay State Prison

REP/KEC 30/10/95

T/SOR/49/5/3/2

October 19, 1995

Dear Jeanne:

I've gotten your fax of October 17th, and also your letter of the 12th. I have placed a call on behalf of Avi and they are due to call me back tomorrow. I'll hold sending this letter back until I hear something, so that by the time you get this you'll have word on him. I was delighted to hear that I now have my own file! Grin.

You mentioned sending Sundiata and others letters or cards of support, which I think would be lovely. However, it isn't really necessary unless it's something that you want to do or have the time to do. Mostly I send the materials so you can get a better picture of the politics of the prisons here in the States.

I'll be with Kom'boa this weekend, so I'll ask him about an impending visit to your end of the world. I surely hope he does come. Ojore and I were distributing his materials before we ever even met him. His writings just make so much sense and are a good way of conducting political education groups, or as a model for our own work and living circumstances. His is "real" anarchism in the most studied and intellectual way. I've met so many others who profess to be anarchists yet haven't studied, nor can they even define it.

It sounds as if your new Criminal Justice Act is made of the same stuff that ours are here. Repression, oppression and more of the same. Here the laws passed are both economically and racially discriminatory - i.e. a sentence for 5 grams of crack cocaine is five times the sentence for the same amount of cocaine. Crack is used by people of color because it's cheaper. It's only the middle and upper classes that use cocaine. Not being able to play music with a repetitive beat!? Damn, now THAT'S repression. Holding your own festivals is a wonderful idea. I can remember in the 60's, the place where all the activists got trained (Martin Luther King, Stokely Carmichael, Rap Brown and so on) was a place called Highlander. One year everyone who was connected to Highlander was under investigation for sedition (treason against the state), so we were prohibited from doing any kind of training for organizers. So we taught through music - and it was wonderful! About as wonderful as your description of the festivals this summer. Let me know how the pub nights work out. Both you and Leslie sound so creative.

I haven't received the proposal from Marilyn as of yet, but you can feel free to write her directly. If you want, let me know and I'll send the address.

Your "impression" about the make up of a lot of anarchists being middle class drop outs is accurate. Here anarchism is more of a "scene" than a serious attempt at living or offering alternatives to what is. It certainly isn't revolutionary. I liked your saying of "A" on their backs and "J" in their mouths. Much the same here, just add some green hair and rings all over the place.

T/SOR/49/5/3/2

Thanks for the materials you sent. It's good to see how others approach the same issues.

I can't remember if I enclosed the listing of political pamphlets that Ojore and I have developed. There are others but I need to catalogue them. So, I'll enclose the list. Why don't you mark off what you want me to send. While I don't expect you to comment on all the material (I swear this is NOT "back to school". Smile), please let me know if you have any questions. It's exciting to begin a new group, but that also brings a certain level of responsibility. I don't know about the history there, but here the anarchists have a way of starting something - a group, or an idea - and then getting bored with it and moving onto the next "good" idea. This becomes very disheartening for the inside people (the prisoners), who then form (justifiably) poor impressions of anarchism and anarchists. I guess the biggest thing I struggle with it to limit by focus. The needs are so enormous and because of that each of us doing this kind of work tends to struggle with burn out, especially those of us in for the long haul.

Enough of my babble. My best to Leslie and my congratulations to both of you on your work. If there is any way I can help, please don't hesitate to be in touch.

Take care.

Bonnie

10/24 Jeanne - I finally got word on Arnold Nafte. He's fine. He is reputed to make claims to be an Israeli citizen, which he's not. They said he'd be out already but he is serving 3 years on an escape attempt. They also said he write overseas because folks in the States know he's manipulative. Bottom line is they said he's fine - that although he claims a hunger strike, his cell is loaded w/ food. B

T/SOR/49/5/3/2

November 14, 1995

Dear Jeanne:

I'm in receipt of yours of the 30th and am sorry for the delay. I am totally swamped here. Because of the disparity in sentencing laws on crack vs. cocaine, the federal prisoners have been rebellion (I'll enclose some information), so that's been one thing keeping me hopping. Then, we had the control unit conference, which is resulting in more work than I ever imagined. They elected me national coordinator, and my only fantasy is training someone who can take it all over within the next year or so. Like any good organizer, I like to put things together and then move out of them, leaving others in charge.....

The whole thing with Ari is one of the reasons that I pretty much deal with political prisoners here. From what I've heard just talking with folks, there are a few prisoners in this country who are good for gathering/manipulating support and who aren't exactly what they seem to be. I'm not at all saying that he has no credence, but being on the Internet doesn't give him any either.

Congratulations on your new member. I know that bringing new people in is always an "up" - even if it's just because of an extra pair of hands is so wonderful! I just had a volunteer in this morning, working at organizing my desk for an hour, and I feel like a new woman! Smile.

I understand what you are saying with having so much to read. There are days I just want to stay home and catch up with the reading - which is really important. If I - or you - don't keep up, then my knowledge of what is going on become shallow and not current. Have you heard from Marilyn yet? She is completely wonderful and you can tell her I said so. Smile.

You are correct in your impatience with groups that just meet and have no program or action connected to their work. That is one of the problems that I also see with many groups here - and like you, I also have just about stopped going to meetings.....most of them lead to no where, and they certainly do not foster any revolutionary consciousness for social change. Are you coping with any sexism in those men complaining about what you are doing to "their" centre? One anarchist group of young people I know in Florida feeds homeless people once a week. I believe that they gather the food from restaurants.....

Yes, any financial help for Ojore would be wonderful. If there is anything I can do to assist you, please don't hesitate to let me know.....i.e. right now I would like to be able to extend his newspaper subscription. A simple thing, but everything is so expensive. In the isolation units, though, their ability to have things to read sometimes makes the difference between mental health and mental distress.

How was the Rude Girls Night? WHAT is the Rude Girls Night?

T|SOR|49|5|3|2

I am enclosing the pamphlets that you requested. Thanks for putting the numbers next to them. It made it easier for me to locate them. I'll be happy to share any others that you want. I just got a note from Lesley along with the "Scottish Anarchist". Tell her I'll write to thank her shortly. Share the enclosed Ron Kuby letter/California Department of Corrections memo with her. I'll let you know what happens. This government is playing me close, just as they do with Ojore and others.....I'm also enclosing the text of a talk I just gave on November 2nd. I don't remember if I've already sent it. Let me know what you think.

Take good care.

Bonnie

T/SOR/49/5/3/2

November 22, 1995

Dear Lesley:

I'm in receipt of your note of November 7th, and I wanted to get a quick acknowledgement out to you for that and the magazines. Thanks so much. We have a four day weekend coming up here (the thanksgiving "holiday"), so I am hoping to finally have the time to read through what you sent. Of course, I'd love to see something about Ojore printed next time around - although it will be after his Campaign. I'm enclosing the text of a recent talk of mine, so I don't know if something like that would be appropriate or if you would want me to write up something separate on control units, or the politics of prisons. Let me know.

I did send Jeanne a bunch of material last time around which I would love it if you could share with her. I am enclosing some other stuff which I'm not sure if I already sent to her.

I've got another speaking engagement coming up in early December - on control units at a Mumia event, so I'm writing something new for that. Actually most of my writing just evolves from the last piece I wrote, so each is slightly different. I'll get that to you once it's done.

Had major problems with the telephones in Ojore's unit. We had a windstorm a week ago, and the phone lines went down over about four States. Imagine! They managed to fix the phone lines everywhere EXCEPT in his unit. Grin. I got out the troops yesterday for telephone calls and poof! They were fixed an hour later.

Not much else to tell at this point. Again, thanks so much for the magazines. I appreciate. Take good care.

T|SOR|49|5|3|2

AMERICAN FRIENDS SERVICE COMMITTEE

CRIMINAL JUSTICE PROGRAM
972 Broad Street, 6th Floor
Newark, New Jersey 07102
201/643-3079 FAX 201/643-8924

Wray Bailey, Director Bonnie Kerness, Associate Director

2/12

Lesley—

It was so good to get yours of the 2nd with "Inside Out". At first glance, it looks wonderful, although I won't have a chance to read it thoroughly until the weekend. Thanks so much for thinking of me. I'm enclosing the text of a speech, which you probably already have. It may be appropriate for a re-print if you write an introduction saying that the U.S. is busy exporting the concept of these hell holes.

Again, thanks for sending me the new "hot-off-the-presses" issue & Congratulations! My best to Jeanne.

T/SOR/49/5/32

Southwest Michigan Coalition Against Racism and Police Brutality
P.O. Box 19962, Kalamazoo, MI 49019
Email: banco_midwest@hotmail.com

June 3, 2001

Dear Friend:

Your help is needed to send two activists from the Southwest Michigan Coalition Against Racism and Police Brutality to the United Nations World Conference Against Racism, Xenophobia, and Intolerance (WCAR), from August 28-September 7 in Durban, South Africa. A brochure about the conference is enclosed.

The conference will mark the first time that such an event has been held in Africa, and the first time that grassroots anti-racist activists and Black organizers throughout the Diaspora can attend and make an impact on international human rights decision-making. Far from being a mere bureaucratic meeting where it will be impossible to discuss serious issues of racism and oppression, the WCAR will provide an opportunity for activists to challenge the United States, the United Kingdom, and other Western countries to end their unjust policies against peoples of color. The WCAR can mean not only the creation of new protective civil rights legislation insuring equality, which can be important, but a new strong anti-racist movement among peoples of color themselves, something which has been absent for the most part since the 1960's. Furthermore, government officials at the conference can be pressured to ensure that the countries of the West, which were built from the slavery of African and Asian peoples, pay reparations.

The Southwest Michigan Coalition Against Racism and Police Brutality is seeking accreditation to the conference. The coalition was founded in March of last year following news reports that over 20 Black men had been jailed naked in Kalamazoo. On April 8, 2000, the coalition organized a march on Kalamazoo City Hall in which over 100 people protested racial profiling and police brutality. The march, which we were told was the first of its kind in the city, was instrumental in pressuring local government officials to create a task force that examined police-community relations in Kalamazoo..

Last August 27, the coalition held a local solidarity march in conjunction with the national March Against Racial Profiling and Police Brutality in Washington, D.C., to commemorate the 37th anniversary of the March on Washington. Next, as the initial step in building a Michigan statewide movement against police brutality and racial profiling, the coalition organized a protest at the state capitol building in Lansing on October 28. Now, the coalition is active in the cases of two Black political prisoners in Michigan: Robert C. Mitchell III, an anti-police brutality activist in Battle Creek who faces life in prison on false assault charges, and Ali Khallid Abdullah, who has been diagnosed with throat cancer.

In addition to the incidents of racism and police brutality in Southwest Michigan, we want to present cases of people, who, like Robert Mitchell and Ali Khallid Abdullah, are unjustly imprisoned in the United States for political offenses. We want to call attention to the racist use of the death penalty and the cases of Sankofa Shakur, Mumia Abu Jamal and other death row cases. We also want to talk about the mass imprisonment of Black and Latino youth; police brutality and racial profiling, which resulted in the recent anti-police brutality protests in Cincinnati; the continued use of forced behavior modification and long-term

over

solitary control units in American prisons; and other issues. We also intend to call attention to Detroit, Michigan, which is the leading city in the United States for police shootings and killings of people in custody. The federal government's typical response to these problems are studies and investigations that rarely produce any meaningful solutions.

Furthermore, our coalition will conduct a plenary for grassroots activists at the WCAR. The plenary will be the first step in building what we hope will be an international network of anti-racist organizers. Already, activists in several countries have expressed an interest in participating in the plenary, where we will invite representatives of oppressed people around the world to testify about their plight in their respective countries.

The Southwest Michigan Coalition Against Racism and Police Brutality and its parent organization, the Black Autonomy Network of Community Organizers, is raising money to send Lorenzo Komboa Ervin and me to the WCAR. Lorenzo, who is a vice chair of the coalition and head of our legal committee, is a long-time activist against racism and police brutality. In the 1960's he worked in the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and the original Black Panther Party. In recent years, he has been active in his hometown of Chattanooga, Tennessee, against the Ku Klux Klan and the large number of killings by the Chattanooga police force. Lorenzo is one of three Black defendants in an important free speech case known as the "Chattanooga 3." He and two other Black anti-police brutality activists were falsely charged and convicted in January, 2001, for "disruption" of a 1998 meeting of the Chattanooga City Council, where the three men had gone with over 150 people to protest the police killings of two Black men. The Chattanooga 3 case is an example of the growing repression of political activists in the United States.

As for me, at the time I helped to found the coalition last year, I had been an activist against racism and police brutality for many years. I am a former member of the Detroit chapter of the original Black Panther Party and was an editor of the Panther newspaper. Later, I was a leader in several activist groups in the Oakland/San Francisco Bay Area, including the National Black Independent Political Party; the Charles Briscoe Committee for Justice, an anti-police brutality group; the anti-apartheid movement against South Africa; and the National Rainbow Coalition. I was also formerly the managing editor of the widely-read Black Scholar magazine, an activist-academic publication.

The trip to South Africa will be very expensive, and we are asking for your support in raising the $2,500-$3,000 for travel expenses, which are just part of the total budget. The plenary alone will cost $1,000. (See the enclosed budget.) Please make whatever donation you can to our effort by sending a check or money order to: BANCO, Acct. No. 7515108434, Old Kent Bank, 4705 West Main Street, Kalamazoo, MI 49006.

Sincerely,

JoNina M. Abron

JoNina M. Abron
Acting Chair

Enclosures

P.S. If you or your organization would like to host a fund raiser for the coalition, please call me at (616)345-3478 or send me an e-mail at banco_midwest@hotmail.com. If you've already contributed, thanks so much.

T/SOR/49/5B/2

Southwest Michigan Coalition Against Racism and Police Brutality
P.O. Box 19962, Kalamazoo, MI 49019

Budget for Grassroots Activists Plenary Session
NGO Forum, U.N. World Conference Against Racism

Meeting/Convention Room Rental	$300.00
Food and Catering (on site)	$200.00
Printing of Materials	$200.00
Equipment Rental	$200.00
Translation, Other Expenses for Speakers (unrelated to honoraria)	$100.00

TOTAL REQUESTED: $1,000.00